

**Sacramento River Conservation Area
Board of Directors
Minutes**

January 24, 2002
3:00 p.m.

Willows City Hall
Willows, Ca

Chairman Ben Carter called the meeting of the Sacramento River Conservation Area to order at 3:05 p.m. at the above location. It was determined there was a quorum of (12) voting members present.

<u>County</u>	<u>Public Interest</u>	<u>Landowner</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Butte	Jane Dolan	Shirley Lewis	
Colusa	Doug White	Ben Carter	
Glenn	(Denny Bungarz)	Don Anderson	
Shasta	Glenn Hawes	(Dan Gover)	
Sutter	(Dan Silva)	Russell Young	
Tehama	Bill Borror	Brendon Flynn	
Yolo	Lynnel Pollock	Marc Faye	
Resources Agency			Mel Dodgin
Cal DFG			Diana Jacobs
State Reclamation Board			Pete Rabbon
USF&WS			Marie Sullivan
US COE			(Mark Charlton)
Cal DWR		(Dwight Russell)	Stein Buer
Bureau of Reclamation			Laura Allen
Cal DWR			Stacy Cepello
Names listed in parentheses represent absences			
Also present an estimated audience of 45 interested persons			
Manager Burt Bundy			
Assistant Pat Brown, Recording Secretary			
Resources Agency			Tim Ramirez

Doug White announced this would be his last meeting; David Womble will replace him as the Colusa PI representative on the SRCA Board.

1. **CONSENT CALENDAR** - Lynnel Pollock moved, seconded by Doug White to adopt the December 6, 2001 minutes. Motion passed by unanimous vote.
2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, UNSCHEDULED MATTERS**; John Merz referenced Page 1-1 from the SRCA Handbook regarding the mission of the organization and questioned whether or not those Board members who do not share the stated mission should resign. Jim Nielsen, former state senator and author of SB1086, gave a brief overview of the reasons behind the creation of the bill, one of which was the need for a spirit of cooperation between landowners and agencies. The vision was for a management plan designed for habitat restoration as a part of the orderly development of the water resources of the Sacramento River Basin, for all beneficial purposes. It did not envision environmental issues at the expense of other issues and concerns. Mr. Nielsen commended those who had been involved with the Program over the last 17 years. He noted this provides a valuable forum for

landowners as well as state and federal agencies who have also come to the table. He encouraged efforts to be inclusive - do not politicize and do not disregard economic growth.

3. **COUNTY BOARD RESOLUTIONS**

- Tedd Mehr – serving as Attorney for Petitioner Tom Gross, and as a voice for the signatories, presented petitions (1) Opposing participation in the Sacramento River Conservation Area, (2) Petition to Confine SRCA Reach 4 to the area within the Sacramento Levees and, (3) Petition to confine SRCA Reach 3 to the area within the Inner River Zone and the Sacramento River Levees to the SRCA staff. The petitions were to all involved agencies and the SRCA Board of Directors to be considered in the decision making process. It was noted the petitioners feel that the 30,000 acres referred to originally in the Handbook were determined by careful analysis and study; the increase to 213,000 acres has come about without that same analysis and study. Also noted were their concerns about invasion by endangered species and the idea of regional government - one county making decisions for another county. He noted that four counties have passed resolutions to reduce the Conservation Area back to the original 30,000 acres. According to Mr. Mehr, the petitioners' main focus is a request of the Board to support bringing the Conservation Area back to its original size, to not consider land outside that area, and to take references to setback levees out of the Handbook.

(Added note: Copies of the petitions with number of signatures noted will be forwarded to the Board members).

One clarification was made that the Conservation Area above the levees matches up to the 100-year floodplain and had initially been considered as an “eligibility area”. Where project levees occur, a 1 mile parameter was used that was not based on physical facts of the river.

Anjanette Martin, TAC Chair, reported briefly on the January 17th TAC meeting and whether there was discussion on the draft Board statement. It was noted the draft was available for review but discussion will take place after the Board gives direction. The TAC did discuss the draft comparison of the SRCA - with and without the outer river area.

- The Chairman opened discussion on the Conservation Area among the Board of Directors which included the following excerpts:
 - differences between the reaches makes it difficult for all to agree, can't apply the same rules.
 - not a regional government - need to make clear that the SRCA Board is not going to override county land use zoning authority.
 - some stakeholders in Reach 2 do not feel the inner river zone definition was properly approached, needs to be addressed.
 - resolutions were born out of fear connected to private property rights; need to be here at the table to discuss the issues. Better off to have 213,000 acres to be looked at in this forum than the 30,000 acres.
- Chairman Carter called the group's attention to the action items that were listed on the draft SRCA Board statement before discussion continued:
- cannot vote to remove the boundary unless convinced that it is of benefit to the landowners; need to have reasons.
 - recognize concerns of landowners, own and farm land in the conservation area along the river. SB1086 is a process, not a plan. Oversight is important, will change representation if drop boundary. Still have problems, even if area is taken away. Local government has no

oversight - this body is only place where issues are brought forward and input from the county. Entire area is not targeted for habitat restoration. Hope this issue will be discussed further; would like to see further defining of the ORZ and its uses – a statement that protects agricultural use of that land.

-landowners put the outer area in as protection - this is not a government agency, this is a forum; gives landowners a strong say. A lot of people are looking at this group, this Handbook.

-need to work hard to correct the perception that the intent is to take 213,0000 acres out of agricultural production

-Meridian to Knights Landing is farmed along the river- line scares landowners. Does serve as a forum and is important - would like to go to the TAC for discussion on advantage to the boundary?

-focus is on Inner River Zone - if line taken away, intent is to focus on IRZ and will still look at coordinating things that influence river whether line is there or not.

-has worked with agencies on an individual basis - takes so much longer than through this forum.

-would like to continue discussion on ORA at the TAC level- ESA is not going to go away; this forum keeps door open for agencies to bring proposed projects to the table.

-thinks issue is whether someone is going to lose their land.

-will there be discussion at the Board on issues outside that boundary?

-this is a forum, voluntary; impact to neighbor is valid concern.

4. **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS** – The Chairman asked the group if, in the interest of time, and because of the importance of the discussion on the Conservation Area, it was acceptable to forgo the oral Committee reports. Information was available in written form in the packets and as handouts.

5. **MANAGER'S REPORT** – Burt Bundy, SRCA Manager, noted written copies of the Manager's report were also available in the Board packets and as handouts.

6. **AGENCY REPORTS** – Pete Rabbon, The Reclamation Board, made available copies of a letter from Senator Johannessen that raised questions about ecosystem restoration and the possible extenuating flood control problems, and the response letter from The Reclamation Board. Also available were copies of a letter from Sacramento River Partners regarding the encroachment permitting process for state restoration projects, and the response letter from The Reclamation Board.

Stein Buer, DWR/Department of Flood Management, announced he would be happy to provide information and/or answer questions about the potential flood fight at Hamilton City.

Before continuing discussion on the Conservation Area, the Chairman noted that there is a real need for better communication and clarification on the intent of the program. Where do we draw line, do we draw a line? Burt reminded the group that the Handbook has had amendments to it, but that the changes are not out yet. He also noted that the TAC is working on a definition of the ORA.

Public Comments:

-question the benign nature of the 213,000 acres. Concept to restore river meander part of SRCA's goals - would have to remove lands from agriculture.

-believe Handbook's intent is to extend habitat restoration beyond the levees.

- need to find a way to make habitat recovery non-invasive; need consideration of impacts.
- no reason why can't respond and reduce the conservation area to its original parameters.
- landowners don't want to be involved because of purchases of land outside of the IRZ - hope to slow that down and kept it closer to the River.
- suggest start with small area and see how it works, then expand the area. As a landowner, feel first line of defense is to go to the county. Bringing county support for reduction of conservation area to the Board, need to listen.
- provided the forum, the people spoke, Board should act on it.
- if Board represents people, then there should not be a debate on how to vote.

It was agreed to carry discussion over to the next meeting to continue public comment. Lynnel Pollock moved, seconded by Brendon Flynn that the Board direct the TAC to “catalogue” the impacts of reducing the Conservation Area. The TAC will also continue to discuss and suggest an Ag related definition of the current Outer River Area.

7. **NEXT MEETING** - The next Board meeting will be on February 28th, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Meeting place TBD.
8. **ADJOURN** – Meeting adjourned 5:25 p.m.